COVID-19

Key steps to

Reopening your business

Region of Peel
working with you

Guide to Preventing COVID-19 in your Workplace: **In-Depth**

Objectives

- Review Ontario's Framework for Reopening
- Review measures to control the spread of COVID-19 in workplaces
- Discuss the components of a public health workplace investigation using a case example
- Provide information on employee return to work following COVID-19 testing
- Identify resources

Reopening: Hierarchy of Controls

Source: Government of Ontario. Workplace Safety Plan

Reopening: Core Four

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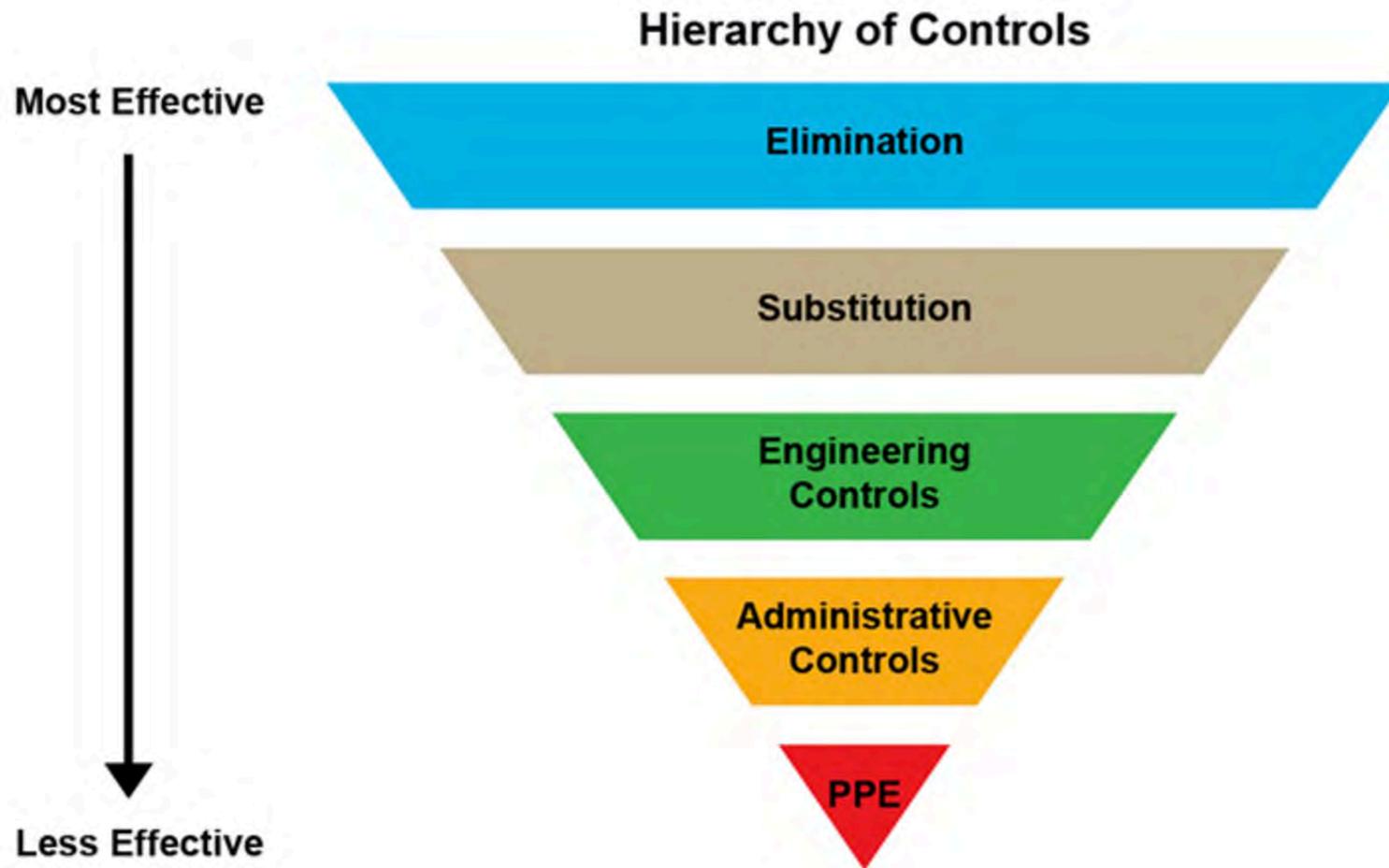
Four key steps for our recovery

COVID-19 continues to spread in Peel. Without a vaccine or treatment, we need to be vigilant to help control this highly contagious and harmful virus. Committing to follow the **Core Four** is the best way to protect our community and the fastest way to restore our thriving communities.

COVID-19 Core Four

2m

Stay apart
Maintain 2-metres distance from everyone outside your **safe social circle**.

Lather up
Wash your hands with soap and water; or use hand sanitizer.

Mask up
Wear a non-medical mask where maintaining physical distancing is difficult and **where masks are mandatory**. Protect the supply of medical grade masks for health care workers.

Get tested
Get tested if you think you have COVID-19 or may have been exposed to it. Stay home, self-isolate and prevent potential spread.

These measures are temporary until we gain control over COVID-19 in Peel. Following these steps will save lives, protect our economy and speed up our recovery.

Workplace Safety Plan

Ontario

Develop your COVID-19 workplace safety plan

Learn how you can create a plan to help protect your workers and others from novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19).

Safety plan questions

1. How will you ensure all workers know how to keep themselves **safe** from exposure to COVID-19?
2. How will you **screen** for COVID-19?
3. How will you **control the risk of transmission** in your workplace?
4. What will you do if there is a **potential case of, or suspected exposure** to, COVID at your workplace?

Webinar 2: In-depth

5. How will you manage any **new risks** caused by changes to the way you operate your business?
6. How will you make sure your plan is working?

Workplace Safety Plan

1. How will you ensure all workers know how to keep themselves **safe** from exposure to COVID-19?

- Provide clear **information** and **instruction** to your employees
- Ensure employees know how to follow the work and hygiene practices, including all new **safety measures**
- Multilingual posters, videos and other resources are available at www.peelregion.ca/coronavirus

Workplace Safety Plan

2. How will you **screen** for COVID-19?

- **Purpose:** to prevent employees with symptoms from entering
- Screening can be active or passive
- Employees with symptoms should **self-isolate** and complete **self assessment tool**

- Posters and other resources are available at www.peelregion.ca/coronavirus
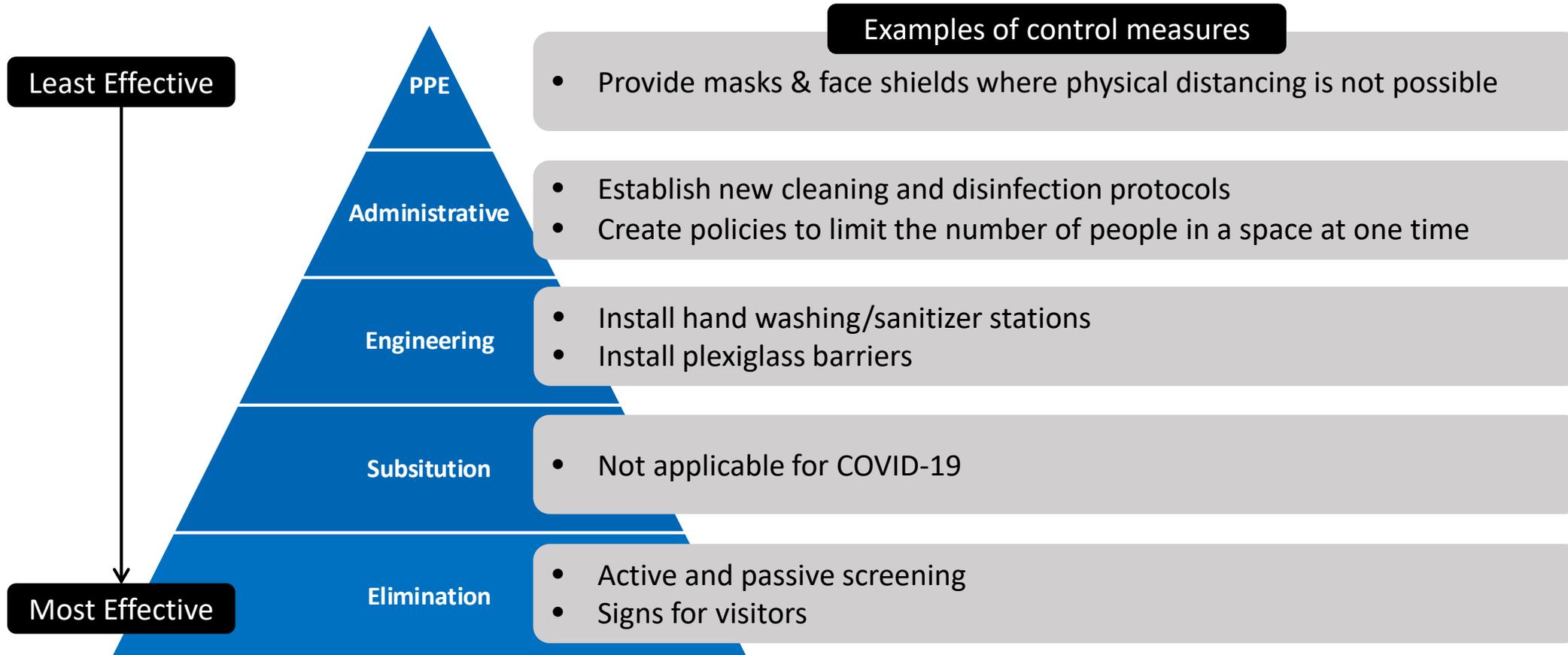
Workplace Safety Plan

3. How will you **control the risk of transmission** in your workplace?

- COVID-19 can be spread by people who do not have symptoms
- It is very important to have effective control measures in the workplace
- You may need to make changes to the workspace and to the ways your work is done
- **Examples of controls**:
    - Maximize physical distance and separation
    - Reduce transmission from surfaces and objects
    - Support good hand and respiratory hygiene
    - Personal protective equipment

Workplace Safety Plan

3. How will you **control the risk of transmission** in your workplace?

Examples of control measures

Least Effective

Most Effective

Level	Examples
PPE	• Provide masks & face shields where physical distancing is not possible
Administrative	• Establish new cleaning and disinfection protocols • Create policies to limit the number of people in a space at one time
Engineering	• Install hand washing/sanitizer stations • Install plexiglass barriers
Subsitution	• Not applicable for COVID-19
Elimination	• Active and passive screening • Signs for visitors

Workplace Safety Plan

3. How will you **control the risk of transmission** in your workplace?

- You can find many other ideas in the sector-specific [resources to prevent COVID-19 in the workplace](#)

Workplace Safety Plan
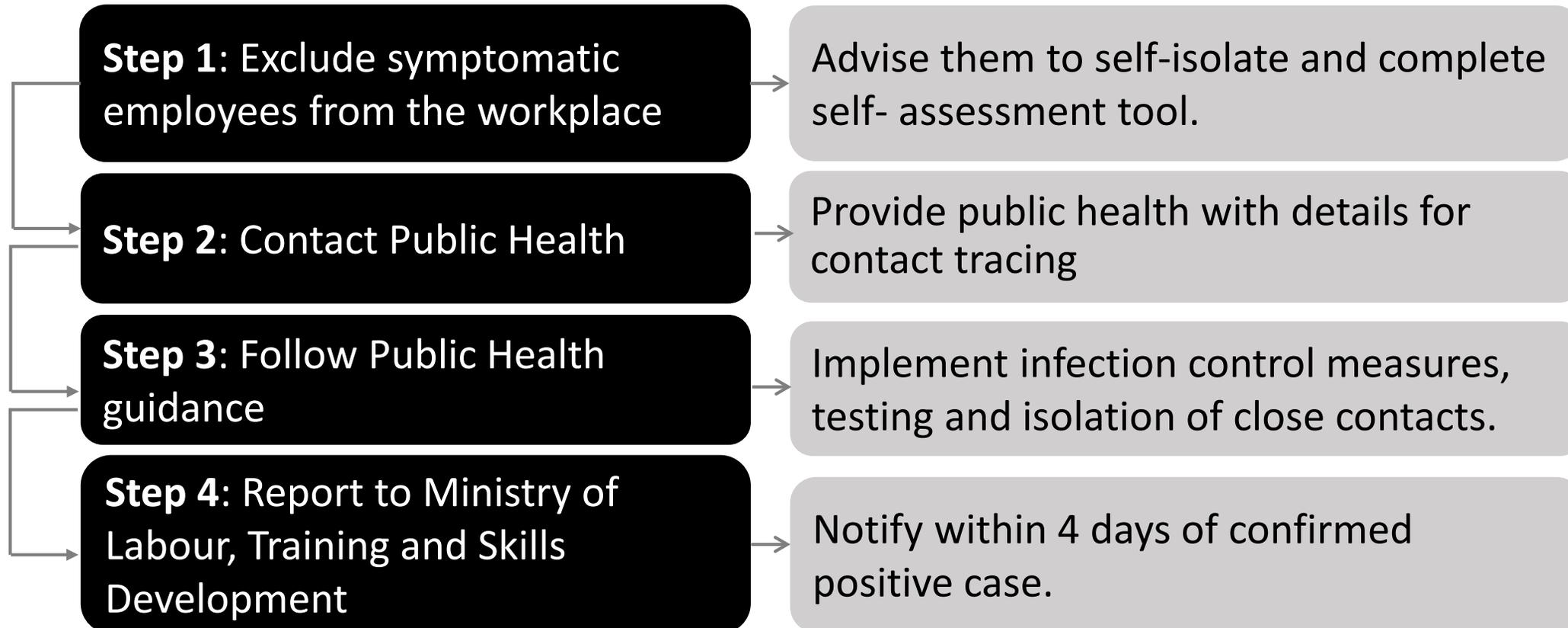
4. What will you do if there is a **case of** COVID-19 at your workplace?

Step 1: Exclude symptomatic employees from the workplace → Advise them to self-isolate and complete self- assessment tool.

Step 2: Contact Public Health → Provide public health with details for contact tracing

Step 3: Follow Public Health guidance → Implement infection control measures, testing and isolation of close contacts.

Step 4: Report to Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development → Notify within 4 days of confirmed positive case.

Roles and Responsibilities

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Employer

- Take all reasonable precautions to protect employees
- Implement preventive measures and provincial guidance
- Notify the Ministry of Labour, Skills Development and Training of positive COVID-19 cases

Webinar 2: In-depth

Public Health

- Lead workplace COVID-19 investigations
- Investigate cases and close contacts of COVID-19 (case and contact management)
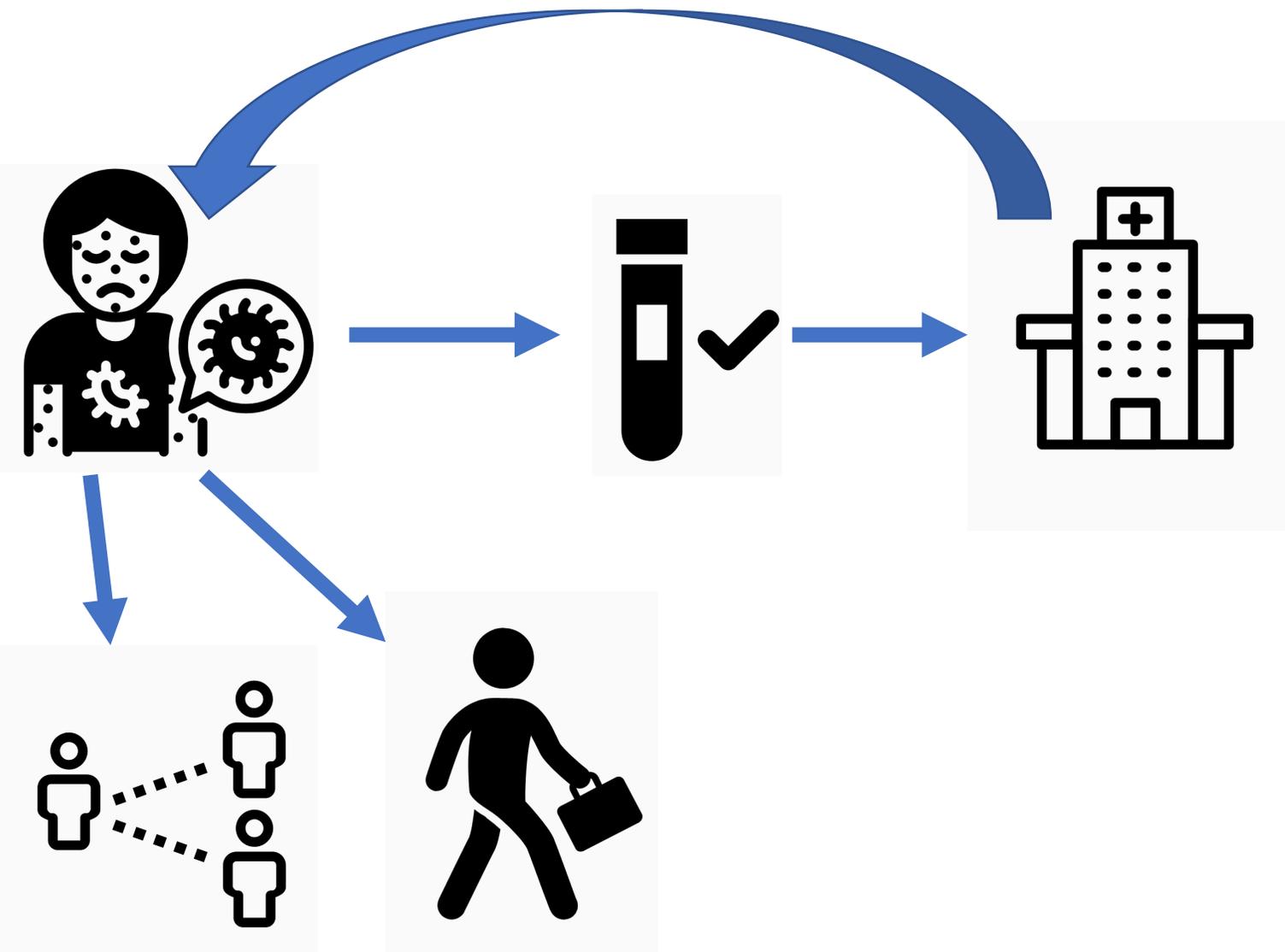- Declare outbreaks and provide recommendations

Ministry

- Investigate occupational illness notifications to determine if employer is in compliance with *OHSA*
- Inspect workplaces and issue order under the *OHSA*

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Case and Contact Management

- Public Health is notified of all positive COVID-19 cases
- Public Health contacts positive COVID-19 cases to ask the following questions:
  - **Where** could you have acquired COVID-19?
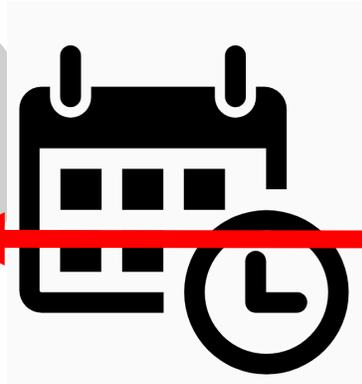 - **Whom** may you have infected?*

Close Contacts

Period of Communicability — 48 hours before symptom onset OR, 48 hours before test, if asymptomatic

Close Contact — 15 minutes or more together AND, less than 2 meters apart*

Workplace Investigation

What **triggers** a workplace investigation?

- If positive COVID-19 case mentions that they worked during their **period of communicability**
- Public health will ask about:
    - Workplace contacts
    - Workplace practices (e.g., masking, physical distancing)
- If an exposure at the workplace suspected this will trigger a **workplace investigation**

Workplace Investigation

What are the **components** of a workplace investigation?

Public health will collect information on:

- Number of employees
- Type of work
- Industry specific information, including for example:
    - Factory vs. office setting
    - Shift work
    - Agency workers
    - Truck drivers
- Potential close contacts of the COVID-19 positive employee
- Surveillance that could help identify contacts

Workplace Investigation

How can I **prepare** for the meeting with public health?

Collect and organize information on:
- Plans or drawings of the workplace
- Photos of the workplace break areas, common areas, locker rooms
- Staffing schedules
- Lists of known clients/customers/visitors in the workplace during the time of exposure
- Lists of employees that could have been at risk of exposure, and their contact information
- Detailed list of all infection prevention controls

Workplace Investigation

When is an **outbreak** declared?

- **Two or more** COVID-19 cases are detected in the workplace within a 14 day period
- These cases must be thought to have **reasonable acquired the infection in the workplace**
- Employees are assumed to have acquired infection in workplace when:
    - No obvious source of infection outside of the workplace, OR
    - Known exposure in the workplace

Workplace Investigation

Working through an **outbreak**

Epidemiology of Outbreak:

- Number of cases and close contacts
- Dates cases worked

Assess potential exposures in the workplace:

- Shared spaces (e.g., locker rooms)
- Review staffing schedules
- Assess potential exposures to clients, customers, and visitors
- Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) measures in place

Workplace Investigation

Who needs to **self-isolate** during an outbreak?

- **All employees** identified as a **case or close contact** of a case must isolate for 14 days:
  - For **cases**: Isolation is 14 days after symptom onset or if asymptomatic it is 14 days after date of test
  - For **close contacts**: Isolation is for 14 days after their exposure (contact) with the case

- **Non-close contacts** may be asked to:
  - Self-monitor for symptoms
  - Notify their employer and Peel Public Health if they develop any symptoms

Workplace Investigation

Who needs to be **tested** for COVID-19 during an outbreak?

Peel Public Health will:

- Recommend testing strategies to identify additional cases associated with the outbreak
- Provide a letter for management to communicate testing recommendations to staff, this letter will provide employees with an outbreak number to bring to an assessment centre
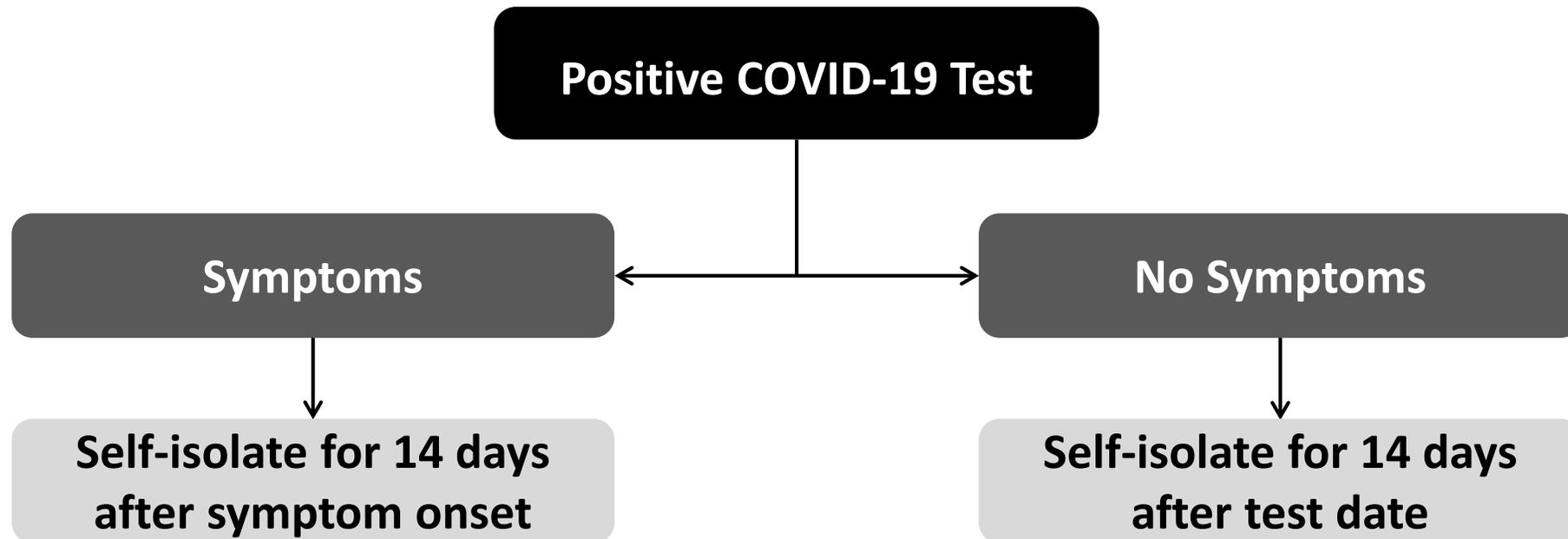
Workplace Investigation

When can employees who **test positive** return to work?

- Employees who test positive for COVID-19 do NOT require a **negative test** before returning to work
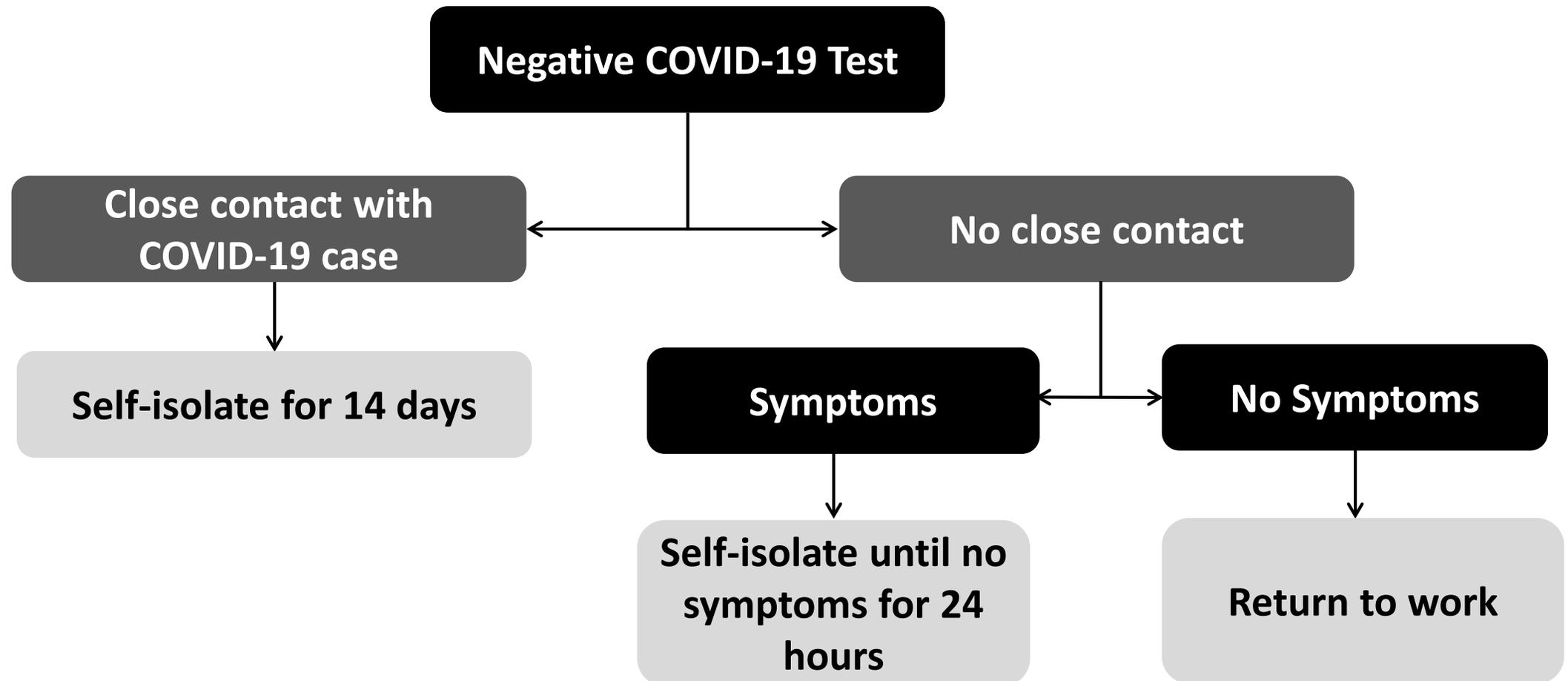
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                    ┌──────────────────────────┐
                    │  Positive COVID-19 Test   │
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   │ Self-isolate for 14   │    │ Self-isolate for 14   │
   │ days after symptom    │    │ days after test date  │
   │ onset                 │    │                       │
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Workplace Investigation

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Can employees who **test negative** return to work?

Negative COVID-19 Test

Close contact with COVID-19 case

No close contact

Self-isolate for 14 days

Symptoms

No Symptoms

Self-isolate until no symptoms for 24 hours

Return to work

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Workplace Investigation

When is an outbreak declared **over**?

- 14 days have passed with no new cases of COVID-19 that are reasonably linked to the workplace, OR

- 14 days after the date when outbreak measures were implemented

Workplace Investigation

Case Study: Largest workplace outbreak in Peel

- Large manufacturing plant with > 250 employees
- Mix of office and factory
- First positive case in early May
- Peel Public Health received multiple daily positive cases from the workplace
- At end of outbreak, a total of **3 clusters of cases** within different areas of the workplace were identified
- Final total of 55 cases (almost 20% "attack rate")

Workplace Investigation

Case Study: Largest workplace outbreak in Peel
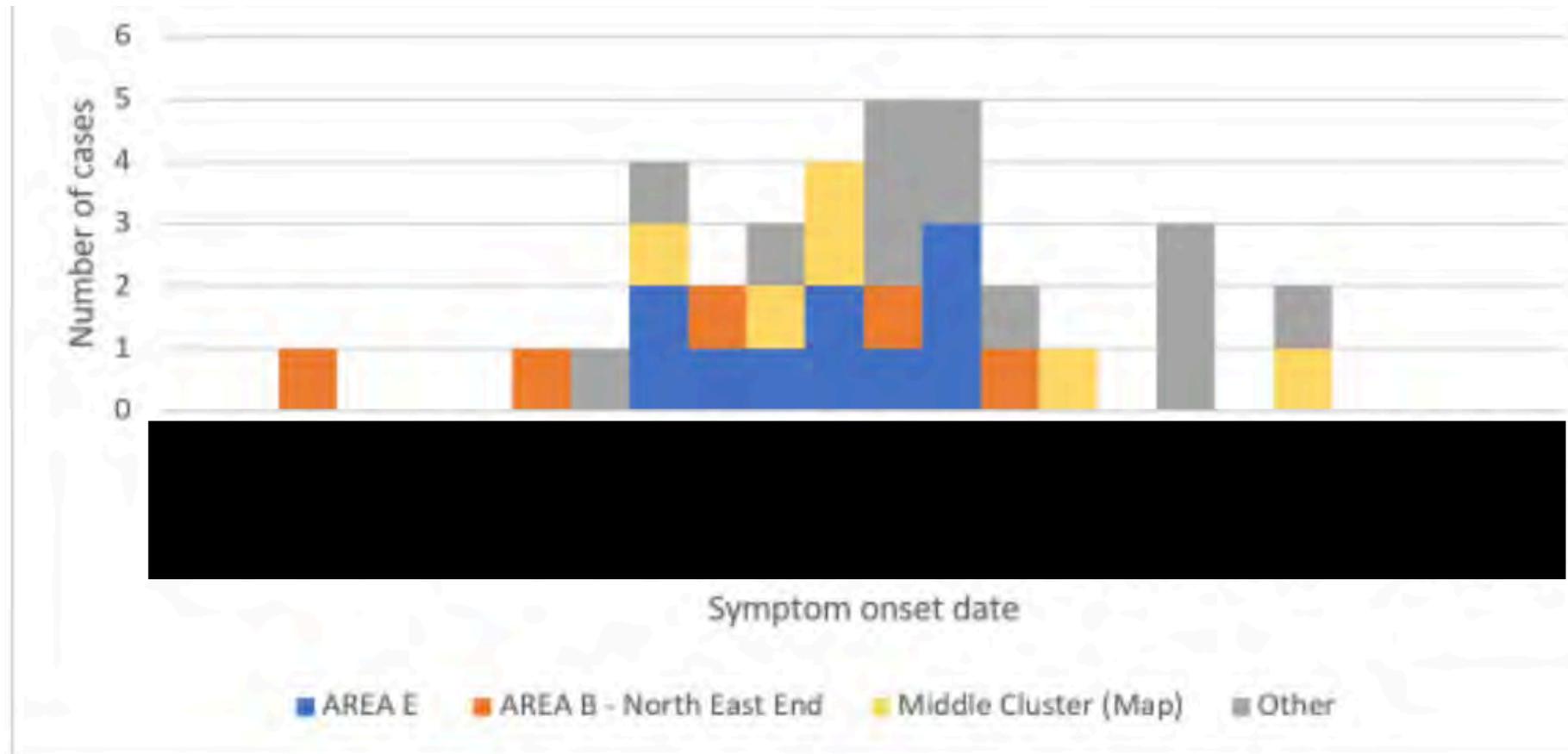
Workplace Investigation

Case Study: Largest workplace outbreak in Peel

Management of outbreak:

- Workplace began teleconferences with Peel Public Health within days of the first case
- Met with Peel Public Health regularly throughout the outbreak
- Mass testing was recommended for all employees
- Plant management closed within ~10 days of first identified case for cleaning
- Remained closed until full isolation period (14 days) passed for all employees to reduce risk of a second wave

Take Home Messages

Build resiliency and plan

- Peel Public Health is committed to helping businesses reduce the risk of COVID-19 in their workplaces
- The provincial Workplace Safety Plan is a helpful resource to assist you with reopening
- Maintaining clear, supportive communication with employees is crucial for preventing and controlling outbreaks (contact tracing)
- It is worthwhile to develop a contingency plan on how business operations may be able to continue with limited staff, in the event of a workplace outbreak

Resources

Region of Peel – Public Health:

- [Helping businesses and workplaces reopen safely during COVID-19](#)
- [Managing a positive COVID-19 case in the workplace](#)
- [Sector-specific guidance](#):
  - [Restaurant and food](#)
  - [Information for mobile operations](#)
  - [Pools, spas and recreational water facilities](#)
  - [Checklist for recreational water facilities](#)
  - [Tattoo, piercing, tanning and salon](#)

Resources

Government of Ontario:

- [Workplan Safety Plan](#) and [template](#)
- [Sector specific guidance and resources](#)
- COVID-19 [Self Assessment Tool](#)

Public Health Ontario:

- Practical [guidance](#) on how to implement hierarchy of controls, safely wear PPE and implement physical distancing in the workplace (non-healthcare)

Public Health Agency of Canada:

- [How businesses and employees can stay safe while operating during COVID-19](#)
- [Resources](#) (videos, audio, print) to mitigate the spread of COVID-19

Mask Use

- Masks alone will not prevent the spread of COVID-19

- The use of non-medical masks or face coverings may not protect you, but may help protect those around you.

- When wearing a mask, it's still important to consistently practice good hand hygiene and physical distancing

Steps to Proper Mask Use

1 Before putting on your mask, **wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

2 **Secure the elastic loops** or ties of the mask around your ears.

3 **Cover your nose, mouth and chin** with the mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.

Steps to Proper Mask Use

4 **Do not touch** the front of the mask while you wear it. If you accidentally touch your mask, clean your hands.

5 **To take off the mask,** remove the elastic loops or ties of the mask from around your ears.

6 **Hold only the loops or strings** and place the mask in a garbage bin with a lid, or if reusable, directly into the laundry.

7 **Wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer after you have discarded your mask.

Types of Masks

N95 respirators	• Medical devices made to prevent exposure to tiny droplets that can remain suspended in the air • Health care workers who wear them undergo a fit-test to find the right make, model and size to ensure a tight seal. • Should be reserved for health care providers and first responders.
Procedural and Surgical Masks	• Although they are not close fitting, blue, disposable masks are fluid resistant and provide some protection against larger respiratory droplets from coughs and sneezes. • Primarily, they prevent the wearer from spreading infectious droplets to others. • Like N95 respirators, these masks are used by health care workers whose safety depends on an adequate supply. • They cannot be washed.
Cloth	• May help slow the spread of COVID-19, and help keep people who may unknowingly have the virus from transmitting it to others.

Source: John Hopkins Medicine. Coronavirus Face Masks & Protection FAQs.

Resources

Region of Peel – Public Health:
- Masks and Other Personal Protective Equipment

Government of Ontario:
- Face coverings and face masks

Public Health Ontario:
- Non-medical Masks and Face Coverings

Public Health Agency of Canada:
- Non-medical masks and face coverings: About
- Video -COVID-19: How to wear a non-medical mask or face covering properly